# Amy Sherald

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| **Amy Sherald** | |
| **Born** | August 30, 1973 (age 46)  [Columbus, Georgia](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Columbus,_Georgia), U.S. |
| **Alma mater** | * [Clark Atlanta University](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Clark_Atlanta_University) * [Maryland Institute College of Art](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Maryland_Institute_College_of_Art) |
| **Known for** | *Official Portrait of First Lady Michelle Obama* |

**Amy Sherald** (born August 30, 1973) is an American painter based in [Baltimore, Maryland](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Baltimore).

She is best known for her [portrait paintings](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Portrait_painting). Her choices of subjects look to enlarge the genre of American art historical realism by telling African-American stories within their own tradition.[[1]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Amy_Sherald#cite_note-:0-1)



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## Education[[edit](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Amy_Sherald&action=edit&section=1&editintro=Template:BLP_editintro" \o "Edit section: Education)]

She received a B.A. degree in painting in 1997 [Clark Atlanta University](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Clark_Atlanta_University). After an apprenticeship to Dr. [Arturo Lindsay](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Arturo_Lindsay), Art History professor at [Spelman College](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Spelman_College),[[2]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Amy_Sherald#cite_note-nmwa-2) she attended the [Maryland Institute College of Art](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Maryland_Institute_College_of_Art), receiving an M.F.A. degree in painting in 2004.[[3]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Amy_Sherald#cite_note-McCauley-3) She followed up her studies with painter [Odd Nerdrum](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Odd_Nerdrum) in [Larvik, Norway](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Larvik,_Norway).[[4]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Amy_Sherald#cite_note-:1-4)

## Career[[edit](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Amy_Sherald&action=edit&section=2&editintro=Template:BLP_editintro" \o "Edit section: Career)]

### First Lady Portrait[[edit](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Amy_Sherald&action=edit&section=3&editintro=Template:BLP_editintro" \o "Edit section: First Lady Portrait)]

*Main article:*[*Michelle Obama (painting)*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Michelle_Obama_(painting))

On February 12, 2018 the Smithsonian's [National Portrait Gallery](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/National_Portrait_Gallery_(United_States)) unveiled [Sherald's portrait of Michelle Obama](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Michelle_Obama_(painting)" \o "Michelle Obama (painting)) making her the first African-American woman to paint an official First Lady portrait. During a double portrait unveiling ceremony attended by both Obamas she and [Kehinde Wiley](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kehinde_Wiley" \o "Kehinde Wiley) were revealed not only as the first black artists to make official presidential portraits at the [National Portrait Gallery](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/National_Portrait_Gallery_(United_States)), but also as artists who each early on prioritized African-American portraiture. [Holland Cotter](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Holland_Cotter) noted in a review that they both blend fact and fiction in their portraiture.[[5]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Amy_Sherald#cite_note-5)[[6]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Amy_Sherald#cite_note-6)[[7]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Amy_Sherald#cite_note-7)

### Baltimore[[edit](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Amy_Sherald&action=edit&section=4&editintro=Template:BLP_editintro" \o "Edit section: Baltimore)]

Based in [Baltimore MD](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Baltimore), Amy Sherald documents contemporary African-American experience in the United States through arresting, otherworldly portraits, often working from photographs of strangers she encounters on the streets. She gave a talk on the theme of empathy for [CreativeMornings/Baltimore](https://creativemornings.com/talks/amy-sherald/1) on November 5, 2015.[[8]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Amy_Sherald#cite_note-8)

## Personal life[[edit](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Amy_Sherald&action=edit&section=5&editintro=Template:BLP_editintro" \o "Edit section: Personal life)]

In 1997 she participated in [Spelman College](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Spelman_College) International Artist-in-Residence program in [Portobelo, Panama](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Portobelo,_Panama" \o "Portobelo, Panama). She prepared and curated shows in the Museo de Arte Contemporaneo and the 1999 South American Biennale in [Lima, Peru](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lima,_Peru). She has taught art in the [Baltimore City Detention Center](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Baltimore_City_Detention_Center),[[9]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Amy_Sherald#cite_note-nytimes.com-9) and in 2008 she did a residency the Tongxian Art Center in [Beijing, China](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Beijing,_China).[[10]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Amy_Sherald#cite_note-10)

Sherald was diagnosed at the age of 30 with congestive heart failure. She was the recipient of a heart transplant in December 18, 2012 at the age of 39.[[11]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Amy_Sherald#cite_note-IRAAA-11)